

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 12.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 13, 1827.

VOL. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ON PRAYER.

Mr. Editor—There is no trick of the church so contradictory in itself, and, at the same time, so specious and profitable, as that of prayer. The analysis of one, on rational principles, cannot but show its discordances. The enumeration, to an omniscient God, of the events that have transpired, and of benefits received, as though to renew his recollection of them; the repetition of grateful protestations, and of high drawn pictures of his power and good qualities, and other flattering methods, to an omnipotent God, as though he was dependant on man for any source of happiness, or could be cajoled into his wishes; to an all wise God, the pointing out of what is thought best, and much wanted, as though he required to be taught the best way to regulate affairs, and could be made to alter his intentions to suit every upstart that chooses to prostrate himself, as he says, standing, at the footstool of the throne of an immaterial God, who consequently cannot need whereon to set or put his feet; the pride of humility with which all the most atrocious conduct, called sins, is attributed to himself by the petitioner, which, if less than one half were attributed to him by a fellow man, would lead to quarrels, hatred, and perhaps bloodshed, as though that God would, in the mildness of his mercy, forget and forgive his offences, who could not forget or forgive the offence of an ignorant man and woman 5000 years ago, even after his only son had sacrificed his life for it.

But these prayers afford excellent opportunities for oblique, cautious surmises; hints and inuendoes, political and theological. I have heard a grey headed divine, at a time of great political contention, in praying for the president of these United States, beg his God "mercifully to change his mind or gently remove him by death." I have heard all manner of sly hints and party arguments to operate upon the minds of the people; the most malicious assertions, and the strongest effusions of passion, and rancorous hatred, poured out by these meek and humble servants of the Lord, before his throne, and in what is called his presence. It is required, also, to come up before the Lord to join in prayer; before that God, too, who is said to be omnipresent, and therefore could hear a man as well in his closet as at St. Paul's or St. Peter's. But after all is done, and many protestations of submission to divine will, a *cante blanche* is given to God of "thy will, and not mine, be done." [Now, why would not this come in as well at the beginning, and save all the other waste of words?]

Is it thought to cajole the Almighty by the many forms of flattery made use of? Is it imagined that he is not aware of what is going on in the world? Is it believed that his happiness is any ways increased by these outpourings of the spirit? If so, then he is a being dependant on inferior beings; and it would seem so, as this is all done *to please* him, and to employ means to convey happiness. If, then, the sum of his happiness is thus increased, there is so much deficiency if our praise is withheld; and on our actions here on earth depends the happiness of him who has the happiness of heaven at control. It is said "the Lord is angry with sinners every day." Now, sin is continually going on; some say there is more of it than of good. Anger implies unhappiness, for no one will allow that an angry being can be any ways happy. Upon the actions of these sinners, then, instigated and influenced by the devil, depends the happiness of the Almighty; therefore, the happiness of God is very much in the power of his old enemy Satan, who, notwithstanding he is cast out and confined in chains, going about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, has in his hands the happiness of the ruler of the universe. But, perhaps, this is all counterbalanced by the occasional repentance of sinners, as it is said "there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than of ninety and nine just persons;" whence it appears that the influence of sinners is immense in heaven, and, probably, that part of the day which is not disturbed by anger occasioned by the evil deeds of sinners, is made happy by the repentance of one sinner at least every day.

I have lately met with the prayer put into the mouth of a Yorkshire shepherd. The whole being too long to transcribe, I will give some extracts from it, as it places the subject in a good light. It begins,

"O Lord, it's but seldom that I come hurklin afore you to tire you with any poor petitions of mine; for I have been often uplifted about what you gave me to complain of; and when ye were pleased to take aught from me, I held my tongue. I have always counted myself unworthy to be heard by such a good being; therefore, I did not like to come yammerin and whining afore ye every hour of the day for this thing and the tother thing. Ye know well yourself it was out of no disrespect, but I tho't it very selfishlike to be higgle hagglin a hale lifetime for favors to a poor frail worm, and from one who knows all my wants so well, and whom I never yet distrusted. But the time is come to expostulate with you," &c. He then enumerates his wealth and wife and sons, and then his only daughfer. "And now thou art threatening to take this precious gift, in the very May flower of life. Is this like the doing of a father and friend? And I were to give my son Joseph a bony ewe lamb, the flower of the flock—how would it look in me afterward if I were to go over the hill and hunt the dogs on it, and then take it myself? What would my son Joseph say of that? I think he would have reason to complain, and I should be loath to do it. It is as much as all our reasons and lives are worth, and my weak sight can see no fatherly hand in such an act. If thou canst not stock heaven with brighter and beauteous spirits otherwise than at the expense of breaking parents' hearts, it strikes me thou hast a dear pennyworth. I know thou wilt do all for the best in the long run; but the feelings thou hast given deserve some commisseration for the present. Mine's a case of great dread and anxiety, and admits of no

standing on stepping stones. There's nothing but splashing through thick and thin. If thou hast indeed revealed to her spirit the secret of her dissolution, I will not insist upon your breaking your word; for I know you are neither a Yorkshire woman, nor a Galloway drover, to be saying one thing the day and another the morrow. But I would fain hope it is only a warning given in kindness to lead to repentance, and that ye intend making a Nineveh job of it after all. We must now, at no more than five days after date, draw on thy bounty, conjunctly and severally, for value received, although we must confess the ransom paid by another, not by us. O Lord! have mercy on us, kneeling before thee on the earth, *the crumb cloth before thy throne*; grant us a remission of our manifold sins. Into these mysteries of man's salvation I dare not so much as peep through the barrel hole of modern devices. We can never dread, nor think, nor dream of aught harsh or severe coming from the beneficent hand that made us—that has preserved us so long—and made us so happy with one another. Woe be to the captious tongue that would represent thee as standing on flaws and punetilios with the creatures of thy hand, even the nineteenth part of a straw's balance, when it is evident to all Nature, that, since the day thou created them, thou never had a thought in thy head that had not the improvement of the breed, both in virtue and happiness, in view."

This, I think, contains rather more sense than those generally offered by the priests, and may afford them a model. I intended to offer some further remarks on another mode of addressing God—psalm and hymn singing; but, as this will take up sufficient room at present, I must postpone it to another opportunity.

CELSUS.

A FUTURE STATE.

Continued from page 163.

But we are told that the soul of man, being spiritual instead of material, is necessarily imperishable. Now, this is assuming one fact to prove by it another; while the very fact assumed needs proof, at least as much as the point does which it is adduced to prove. It is like proving this, that, and the other thing, from the authority of the Bible; without first proving the Bible to possess, or to be, any authority. These very modest reasoners only ask you, like Archimedes, for "a place to set their pivot," and they will construct you a lever to move the world. But who has seen, or who can define a spirit? Who knows its qualities and capacities; and who can tell why it should be more perdurable than matter? It seems demopnstrated by the discoveries and investigation of modern science, that there is no known process, either of art or Nature, by which matter is, or can be, destroyed. Its accidental qualities may be changed, and are, indeed, almost continually changing; but its essential properties remain the same. When we have thus much of proof respecting the durability of matter, and when we have not the least evidence of even the existence of such a thing as spirit, there would seem to be neither room nor reason for giving any weight, or any further consideration, to this argument.

Is it thought to cajole the Almighty by the many forms of flattery made use of? Is it imagined that he is not aware of what is going on in the world? Is it believed that his happiness is any ways increased by these outpourings of the spirit? If so, then he is a being dependant on inferior beings; and it would seem so, as this is all done to *please* him, and to employ means to convey happiness. If, then, the sum of his happiness is thus increased, there is so much deficiency if our praise is withheld; and on our actions here on earth depends the happiness of him who has the happiness of heaven at control. It is said "the Lord is angry with sinners every day." Now, sin is continually going on; some say there is more of it than of good. Anger implies unhappiness, for no one will allow that an angry being can be any ways happy. Upon the actions of these sinners, then, instigated and influenced by the devil, depends the happiness of the Almighty; therefore, the happiness of God is very much in the power of his old enemy Satan, who, notwithstanding he is cast out and confined in chains, going about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, has in his hands the happiness of the ruler of the universe. But, perhaps, this is all counterbalanced by the occasional repentance of sinners, as it is said "there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than of ninety and nine just persons;" whence it appears that the influence of sinners is immense in heaven, and, probably, that part of the day which is not disturbed by anger occasioned by the evil deeds of sinners, is made happy by the repentance of one sinner at least every day.

I have lately met with the prayer put into the mouth of a Yorkshire shepherd. The whole being too long to transcribe, I will give some extracts from it, as it places the subject in a good light. It begins,

"O Lord, it's but seldom that I come hurklin afore you to tire you with any poor petitions of mine; for I have been often uplifted about what you gave me to complain of; and when ye were pleased to take aught from me, I held my tongue. I have always counted myself unworthy to be heard by such a good being; therefore, I did not like to come yammerin and whining afore ye every hour of the day for this thing and the tother thing. Ye know well yourself it was out of no disrespect, but I tho't it very selfishlike to be higgle hagglin a hale lifetime for favors to a poor frail worm, and from one who knows all my wants so well, and whom I never yet distrusted. But the time is come to expostulate with you," &c. He then enumerates his wealth and wife and sons, and then his only daughfer. "And now thou art threatening to take this precious gift, in the very May flower of life. Is this like the doing of a father and friend? And I were to give my son Joseph a bony ewe lamb, the flower of the flock—how would it look in me afterward if I were to go over the hill and hunt the dogs on it, and then take it myself? What would my son Joseph say of that? I think he would have reason to complain, and I should be loath to do it. It is as much as all our reasons and lives are worth, and my weak sight can see no fatherly hand in such an act. If thou canst not stock heaven with brighter and beauteous spirits otherwise than at the expense of breaking parents' hearts, it strikes me thou hast a dear pennyworth. I know thou wilt do all for the best in the long run; but the feelings thou hast given deserve some commisseration for the present. Mine's a case of great dread and anxiety, and admits of no

standing on stepping stones. There's nothing but splashing through thick and thin. If thou hast indeed revealed to her spirit the secret of her dissolution, I will not insist upon your breaking your word; for I know you are neither a Yorkshire woman, nor a Galloway drover, to be saying one thing the day and another the morrow. But I would fain hope it is only a warning given in kindness to lead to repentance, and that ye intend making a Nineveh job of it after all. We must now, at no more than five days after date, draw on thy bounty, conjunctly and severally, for value received, although we must confess the ransom paid by another, not by us. O Lord! have mercy on us, kneeling before thee on the earth, *the crumb cloth before thy throne*; grant us a remission of our manifold sins. Into these mysteries of man's salvation I dare not so much as peep through the barrel hole of modern devices. We can never dread, nor think, nor dream of aught harsh or severe coming from the benificent hand that made us—that has preserved us so long—and made us so happy with one another. Woe be to the captious tongue that would represent thee as standing on flaws and punctilios with the creatures of thy hand, even the nineteenth part of a straw's balance, when it is evident to all Nature, that, since the day thou created them, thou never had a thought in thy head that had not the improvement of the breed, both in virtue and happiness, in view."

This, I think, contains rather more sense than those generally offered by the priests, and may afford them a model. I intended to offer some further remarks on another mode of addressing God—psalm and hymn singing; but, as this will take up sufficient room at present, I must postpone it to another opportunity.

CELSUS.

A FUTURE STATE.

Continued from page 163.

But we are told that the soul of man, being spiritual instead of material, is necessarily imperishable. Now, this is assuming one fact to prove by it another; while the very fact assumed needs proof, at least as much as the point does which it is adduced to prove. It is like proving this, that, and the other thing, from the authority of the Bible; without first proving the Bible to possess, or to be, any authority. These very modest reasoners only ask you, like Archimedes, for "a place to set their pivot," and they will construct you a lever to move the world. But who has seen, or who can define a spirit? Who knows its qualities and capacities; and who can tell why it should be more perdurable than matter? It seems demonstrated by the discoveries and investigation of modern science, that there is no known process, either of art or Nature, by which matter is, or can be, destroyed. Its accidental qualities may be changed, and are, indeed, almost continually changing; but its essential properties remain the same. When we have thus much of proof respecting the durability of matter, and when we have not the least evidence of even the existence of such a thing as spirit, there would seem to be neither room nor reason for giving any weight, or any further consideration, to this argument.

When, however, reason fails to establish the dogma, our feelings and passions are called to its aid, and our vanity is enlisted under its banners, through the flattering unction of our dignity and importance in the scale of existence. *Æsop* tells of a certain frog, who burst in attempting to swell himself to the size of the ox. We leave the application of the fable to the judgment of the reader; after he has for a moment descended with us from the stilts on which fancy has mounted him, and looked calmly and philosophically at man's intrinsic value and relative dignity in the scale of creation.

Man, in intellectual excellence, stands at the head of all the created intelligence which is located on this earth; he sees no being with endowments or capacities superior to his own. But he sees, in himself and every thing around him, the works of a being so indefinitely superior to himself in all those qualities which he conceives to belong to, or to denote intellectual excellence, that, for the want of a standard by which to measure or define the limits of those qualities, he at once pronounces that being to be infinite. But though this word, *infinite*, in reality expresses nothing, save man's utter inability to define or limit that to which he applies it; yet it proves that there is, in the universe, at least one intellect unmeasurably superior to man's: and, if so, it shows, also, that there may be, and possibly is, a graduated scale of created intellectual excellence, extending upwards from man indefinitely, and filling at least a portion of that amazing distance on the mental scale which, though we cannot measure, we know must and does exist between man and God. From man downward, we can perceive a very regular chain of intellectual existence; and we can trace it, as it were, link by link, down at least to the oyster, and, as many suppose, even into the vegetable creation. The links which are above us we do not see; but will this warrant us in the conclusion that they do not exist? That other worlds than ours exist—worlds, compared with the sum total of which ours is but as a drop of water to the ocean, we have the most satisfactory evidence. Are these worlds unpeopled? If not, then are they peopled by those who are above, or below, or like us, in the intellectual scale? Why, when we set no limits to God's power, and when we see that he has exerted that power indefinitely in the creation of worlds; why, we ask, is God to stop, in his *intellectual* creation, at so humble a point as that which is occupied by man? But if he has not; if there are, indeed, at this moment, in other worlds and in other spheres, a series of created beings which compose, indefinitely, the links of the intellectual chain from man upward, as we see and know that there is from man downward, then we should be glad to know why man's relative importance in the scale entitles him to an endless existence, when the very next links below him are not even imagined to endure longer than they are visible here.

But, as a last resort, we are cited to arguments founded in supposed analogies, and told that the doctrine of a resurrection finds corroboration there. We are aware that some very clear and powerful minds (and, among others, that of the late Mr. Paine) have been apparently satisfied with arguments drawn from this source. But no man's belief is a guide for us. We want the convictions of reason; and those convictions have never resulted to our minds from these pretended analogies. The most

prominent reason why we have hitherto lacked conviction is, that the analogies which we have had the fortune to see adduced on this subject are, in truth, not analogous. So far as we are informed, those relied on are, the germination of seed sown in the earth; the repeated reproductions of a perfect animal from the sections of a polypus; and the revivifications of flies, and some other insects and animals, after they have been long apparently dead.

The first is an argument ascribed to St. Paul, as a proof and illustration of the resurrection of the body. It is to be found in 1st Corinthians, ch. 15, from the 34th to the 46th verses; and, to those who will examine it philosophically, we are willing to leave it for what it is worth. The argument, such as it is, is based on a false assumption—that the death of the old seed produces the new crop. But this is not true in point of fact. The old seed does not die. If it does, your new crop is gone. Kill the *germ*, and the seed will never vegetate. This is well-known and familiar to every planter, and, we should suppose, to every one else at the present day. The apostle, then, is not borne out by the facts, when he says, "thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." But if this consideration were not fatal to the analogy, and, of course, to the inference, there is another which is, viz., that the grain we reap, although of the same species, is not the same grain which we sowed. The *identity* is gone: and it might as well be pretended that a man continues to exist in his offspring, and is, for that reason, immortal, as that the vegetation of seed furnishes an argument corroborative of his future existence. The *species* is, indeed, in both cases, continued; but the *individual* is lost.

To be continued. 196.

BIBLE ABSURDITIES.

Mr. Editor—Should we take up the history of the American continent, which history was without date or signature, and, in the course of our reading, find it stated that steamboats run from New York to Albany daily, would we suppose the historian to be a contemporary with our puritan fathers, or to have written the history any time previous to the invention of steamboats? Every body will agree with me that it is impossible. Let this argument hold good in all similar cases.

We read (see Abernethy's Compend of General History, page 59) that glass was first invented by Bonalt, a monk, in England, A. D. 664. Now, if we find a history that speaks of glass being used, may we not say that that history must have been written since the invention of glass? We find a lookingglass mentioned, Exodus, 38th c., 8th v. See, also, Isah. 3d c., 23d v.—1st Cor., 13th c., 12th v.—2d Cor., 3d c., 18th v.—James, 1st c., 23d v.—Rev. 4th c., 6th v., and 21st c., 18th v. We find by the same author quoted above, (page 53,) that beds were first invented by bishop Paulinus, of Nola, in Campagnia, A. D. 400: yet we read of beds in Exodus, 28th c., 33d and 34th v., and 39th c., 25th and 26th v., and Jeremiah, 14th c., 20th v. May we not be allowed to say, that these writings must have been written after that glass and beds were invented?

There is something said concerning the temple or house of God, which evidently serves to place the origin of some of the early writers of scripture posterior to building the temple. This temple, the scripture says, was built by Solomon, and completed in the eleventh year of his reign: yet mention is made of the house of God in Joshua, 9th c., 23d v., where Joshua told the Gibeonites that they should not be freed from being bondmen, but should be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of God. See Judges, 19th c., 18th v., A certain Levite going to the house of the Lord, and 20th c., 31st v., And the men of Benjamin began to smite and kill as at other times in the highways, of which one goeth up to the house of God. David says of Ahithophel, We walked into the house of God in company: again, I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the house of God. Should any say God had other houses before the temple was built, let him read 2d Samuel, 7th c., 6th v., where God says, I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. The foregoing observations are submitted for consideration.

As I have a little room left on this sheet, I will insert a few more observations that are designed to show the inconsistency and absurdity of the Bible. We are told, Gen., 34th c., that the two sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, fell upon a walled city, with sword in hand, and slew all the males, and took the women and children captives, and all the spoil, and this when, according to the scripture, they were neither of them six years old.

We read, Deut., 27th c., 26th v., that cursed is he that confirmeth not all the words of this law, (of Moses.) We read, too, that he which breaks one of these least commands, and teach men so to do, shall be accounted least in the kingdom of heaven; and he that fails in one point is guilty of all. We see it said of Christ, that he came not to destroy but to fulfil the law; and, again, it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than one tittle of the law should fail. Yet, at other times, we see him teaching, that the precepts of the law are not good, and substituting others in their stead. In the 10th c. of Mark, we read of the Pharisees asking Jesus, if it's lawful for a man to put away his wife. He answers, what does Moses say? Moses says, give her a bill and put her away. Jesus adds, for the hardness of your hearts he wrote you this precept, but from the beginning it was not so; and tells them not to put away their wives but for one cause only. In these remarks we see the inconsistency and instability of Jesus. We see, too, what a fine character he gives Moses; and we see that the law of God, which curses for the least transgression, is suited to the hardest of hard hearts—the Jews.

I wish to inform the editor of the *Antidote*, that I have had the perusal of all the numbers of that paper, and have noticed the finger of contempt they have pointed at me in their 12th number; but, as they are not the first that has pointed it, and as I am not the only one that is pointed at, and as it is not an uncommon thing for the Christian to persecute and scandalize those that think different from them, I shall regard it as an evil peculiar to their religion, and say no more.

G.

MR. SCHUTZ'S FACTS.

Sir—As Mr. Shultz's "facts" have attracted considerable attention, permit me through the medium of your publication to state to that gentleman two or three *notorious facts*, which appear to have escaped his observation, and respectfully to request from him a solution of their apparent inconsistency.

It is a fact, that every one who can read and understand the English language must conclude Mr. Shultz to be a disbeliever in the authenticity of the Pentateuch, and of the supernatural or divine origin of Christianity: in proof of this I might, I doubt not, bring forward fifty of his *facts*, but one or two will be amply sufficient: in his 28th he says, "the firmaments mentioned by Moses have the most absurd and contradictory definitions ever used by any mortal, and bear incontestible evidence that such random guesses never could proceed from any God;" in his 41st, "Moses frequently relates the same story twice, but never twice alike; and that is an infallible sign of a dealer in fiction;" and, in his 46th, we are told, "Moses and Aaron were too much interested to be received as impartial witnesses. You may as well expect to find our priests acknowledge themselves hypocrites."

It is a fact, that Mr. Shultz cannot prove, (as he says in No. 171,) "that God never performed more than one miracle, and that one the miracle of creation, in one second of time." By this assertion he of course denies his belief in atheism, or the eternity of matter; but I would ask him where does he receive the subject matter, the basis of this *fact* from?

It is a fact, that Mr. Shultz cannot produce (at least, he does not) any other authority than that of the comrades or followers of Christ, in support of the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments, his firm belief in which he acknowledges in No. 10 of the Correspondent.

That Mr. Shultz is no infidel—that he is a strong believer in *some* system or other I have no doubt, though I confess my inability to discover what that system is. I must even say his writings appear to me to bear some affinity, in principle, with the language of the old lady, who, hearing of the capture of Burgoyne, observed, with much earnestness, "Is he taken, and all his men?—I am glad of it," and, in the next breath, inquired, "Which side was he fighting for?"

After having refused credence to the Mosaic account of the creation, I am at a loss to know by what means Mr. S. became apprized, not only of what was the *religion* of the first pair of mortals, but even of the fact that this pair ever enjoyed a state of existence. In conclusion, I may add, it is not alone my individual opinion that his list of *facts* is extended to a length which detracts from their novelty and interest. It is true, he may readily find several *Christian* precedents for so doing, but this is an authority I should suppose he would not lay hold of. I am further of opinion, that several of his *facts* (even those respecting the priests, vide Corres., No. 8, vol. 2, &c. &c.) will scarcely bear the test of proof, even of a circumstantial nature.

I am, sir, &c. &c.

New York, Oct. 1, 1827.

S.

TRIUMPH OF TRUTH. BY C. SCHULTZ.

Continued from page 151.

190. It is a fact, that the Jews even derived their "scapegoat" for the sins of the people from the theology of Brahma.

191. It is a fact, that the Hindoos had attained to greater knowledge of astronomy 3000 years before Christ than any of your "inspired" nations had acquired 2 or 300 years ago.

192. It is a fact, that the primitive earth is admitted to have been formed of horizontal strata; and, if so, it follows of course, that if Noah's deluge had continued until this time still a mere deluge of water, it never could have deranged the horizontal strata in the manner we now find them. It is, therefore, manifest, that the present ruinous appearance of those strata must have been produced by a more solid agent than water; and what that agent was we have shown in our Review of the Deluge.

193. It is a fact, that the pretended proofs and arguments of Leslie, Campbell, Watson, and other advocates for "revelation" and "miracles," considered as *antidotes* to deism and theism, are weak in the extreme; as all such must be, when founded on such baseless authority; because they will prove too much: they will serve equally well to establish the truth of witchcraft, or of apparitions, or of any other general delusions under which mankind has been involved.

194. It is a fact, that some of Christ's "miracles" were actually performed, while others were fabricated altogether.

195. It is a fact, that the "wine," at his wedding feast, must have been provided privately, beforehand.

196. It is a fact, that his walking on the water is nothing more than a little straining of the truth; for, by means of a girdle of cork, or even of fish bladders, which were plenty enough, he would be enabled to walk *in* the water, and pretty high above the surface.

197. It is a fact, that Jesus "calmed the waves" by the same process that he saw mother Nature do it before him: for, while his fishermen were cleaning any fat fish on the sea shore, he, no doubt, perceived what an astonishing effect even the thick oil of fish had in calming the surface of the water along the shore; and, as olive oil abounded in that country, he, no doubt, tried further experiments with a more fluid oil, and thus found another agent for performing another miracle; for all that was now necessary for him to do was to pour a vial of oil, unperceived, over both sides of the boat, and the water would soon look as smooth as a lookingglass, around the boat.

198. It is a fact, that the Jews of respectability used caves or sepulchres for their dead; and, had poor Lazarus been buried *under* ground, all the Jesuses and apostles who ever existed could never have raised him from the dead. But it is evident that Lazarus was suffering under one of those numerous afflictions which only suspend animation, and had accidentally recovered when Jesus and Mary visited the tomb as a mark of friendship.

199. It is a fact, that the miracle of feeding such multitudes with a few fishes, as well as many others, were never performed at all.

200. It is a fact, that the prophecy of Christ concerning the destruction of Jerusalem was not even written until after that destruction had taken place!

204. It is a fact, that Christ and his followers believed that the day of judgment, or *end of this world*, was nigh at hand; and Jesus even ventured to prophesy, that the "generation" (then living) would not pass away before that day arrived!!! Every prophecy, therefore, is entitled to the same degree of credit as this is.

202. It is a fact, that your Bible is like a nose of clay, which can be moulded to suit every face; for so does that volume enable every sect to prove, that all the rest are wrong, and going headlong to the devil!

203. It is a fact, that the Christians condemn the god Jaggernaut, for burning, for a few minutes, a few old, vile, and guilty sinners; while they applaud their own God and Jesus, for condemning to an everlasting roasting millions of harmless and innocent infants, for crimes committed by their ancestors, thousands of years ago!!!

204. It is, therefore, an indisputable fact, that even the god Jaggernaut is a god of "tender mercy" in comparison with the god of the Christians!

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE SEVENTH.

Continued from page 172.

According to the Hindoo chronology, Brahma and Christna were created nearly 5000 years ago. In the year 3606, Christna descended on the earth for the purpose of defeating the evil machinations of Chivan. Christna was born of poor, obscure parents, his mother a *virgin*, and his father a *carpenter*. In his infancy he led a very humble life. He made war on the very venomous *serpent* called Calengam, whom, after a fierce contest, he defeated by *bruising his head*, he himself receiving, during the contest, *a wound in the heel*. He died, at last, between *two thieves*. He is represented as a meek, tender, and benevolent being; preaching the most pure and holy doctrines, and living a life of the most exemplary virtue. Indeed, throughout the sacred books of the Brahmins, charity, hospitality, mercy, and benevolence are strictly enjoined. Notwithstanding the exclusive claims of the Christians, the following maxims are to be found in the Hindoo books: "Never to hear patiently of evil; nor to speak that which is mischievous and wicked; to utter no lies, prevarication, or hypocrisy; to use no deceit, nor overreaching in trade or dealing; never to oppress the weak and humble, nor to offer any violence to your neighbor: to keep your hand from pilfering and theft, and in no way whatever to injure a fellow creature."

In the Hindoo worship, baptism, by sprinkling with water, is observed as a ceremony, initiating the children into the holy faith. Images of celestial beings are highly esteemed; and the Brachmans, or priests, arrogate the same rank and consequence as is done by this order among Christians. They not only consider themselves of more importance than

the sovereigns, but they think it a great degradation to eat the same food as is eaten by the kings. Their persons are held in sacred reverence, and on no account must their blood be shed, even should they commit murder. On all important occasions they are consulted by the state, and their advice is implicitly followed.

Although the resemblance between Christianity and the Hindoo religion is not so striking as that between the former and the Persian mythology, the points are strong enough to prove their reciprocal relation; and to show that Christianity has no other foundation than in the reveries of the Judian philosophers, who embodied or personified ideas, by giving reality to their own fancies and imaginations, the better to deceive and govern the multitude. On the other hand, these philosophers, who attached a secret meaning to these phantoms, pretended to trace the whole in the heavens or constellations. This has been placed in a clear light by Dupuis, by Volney, and latterly by Dr. Constancio, in his lucid exposition of the "Origin of Christianity, or Truth drawn from Fables," which has appeared in the *Correspondent*. To enable the reader to understand fully this able exposition, the doctor has referred to a celestial map. I had lately occasion to turn to a map of this description in order to ascertain the exact bearing of *Virgo* to another constellation. But how great was my surprise to find that the projector of this map had omitted the figure of the Virgin altogether. I soon ascertained that this spurious production, which was executed in this country, originated with a fanatic, who, by this prostitution of talents, wished to obliterate altogether one of the most undeniable proofs of the mythological origin of the Christian religion. It was the same spirit that led another fanatic to imagine, that by expunging the account of the causes of the progress of Christianity from an edition of Gibbon's *History of Rome*, which he reprinted in this country, he would be able to suppress this transcendent and incontrovertible exposition. Futile attempts! The age in which we live is too enlightened to countenance practices so barbarous, and so hostile to the advancement of useful knowledge.

Volney, in a note to a London edition of the "Ruins of Empires," states, on the authority of a Persian writer, that "the picture of the first decan of the Virgin represents a beautiful female with flowing hair, sitting in a chair, with two ears of corn in her hand, and suckling an infant, called Jesus by some nations, and Christ in Greek. In the library of the king of France (he continues) is a manuscript in Arabic, marked 1165, in which is a picture of the twelve signs; and that of the Virgin represents a young woman with an infant by her side. The whole scene, indeed, of the birth of Jesus is to be found in the adjacent part of the heavens. The stable is the constellation of the charioteer and the goat, formerly Capricorn; a constellation called the *stable of Iou*; and the word *Iou* is found in the name of Iouseph, (Joseph.) At no great distance is the ass of Typhon (the great she bear) and the ox or bull, the ancient attendants of the manger. Peter the potter, is Janus with his keys and bald forehead: the twelve apostles are the genii of the twelve months, &c. The Virgin has acted very different parts in the various systems of mythology: she has been the Isis of the Egyptians, who said of her in one of their inscriptions cited by Julian, *the fruit I have brought forth is the sun*. The

majority of traits drawn by Plutarch apply to her, in the same manner as those of Osiris apply to Bootes: also the seven principal stars of the she bear, called David's chariot, were called the chariot of Osiris; and the crown that was situated behind, formed of ivy, was called *Chem Osiris*, the tree of Osiris. The Virgin has likewise been Ceres, whose mysteries were the same with those of Isis and Mithra; she has been the Diana of the Ephesians; the great goddess of Syria, Cybele, drawn by lions; Minerva, the mother of Bacchus; Astræa, a chaste virgin taken up into heaven at the end of the golden age. Thems, at whose feet is the balance that was put in her hands. The Sybil of Virgil, who descends into hell, or sinks below the hemisphere with a branch in her hand."

Besides these resemblances, noticed by Volney, of the Christian legend to the oriental mythology, as delineated in the aspect of the heavens, or constellations, it is easy to trace the numerous mythological systems, which almost all nations have adopted, and the variety of changes which they have undergone, to the same source. After having altered history—disavowed the origin of physical representations—forgotten the signification of monuments, and even seen and read in them that which never existed, the desire of finding every where a familiar fable had but one step to take. It had only to sacrifice or put aside the objects of ancient credulity, and to disfigure an anterior religion, in order to bend it to the tales of a new mythology. Almost all the Tartar princes affect to carry back their genealogy to a celestial virgin, impregnated by a ray of the sun, or by some other equally marvellous means. In other words, the mythology which serves as the point of commencement of their annals has a reference to the age in which the sign of the virgin marked the summer solstice. The Greeks ascribed the origin of the Scythians to a virgin, half woman, half serpent, who had a commerce with Hercules or Jupiter, both emblems of the generating Sun. The Druids adored a virgin, who brought forth a child. By this the initiated understood, the celestial virgin who, every year, at midnight, glittering in the highest heaven, gave the world an infant God, the Sun, issuing from the winter solstice.

A modern writer, a native of Scotland, named Mackey, has recently published a work of great research, entitled "The Mythological Astronomy of the Ancients demonstrated, by restoring to their fables and symbols their original meanings;" in which he has, with a masterly pen, cleared away the rubbish that has so long obscured this naturally interesting subject, and exhibited as far as he could do it with safety in a despotic country, the imaginary founder of Christianity in his "pagan vestments." Although the generality of mankind, he remarks, do not perceive the drift of the author of the Old Testament books, they are positive that the meaning which they have imbibed, though contrary to all the known laws of God, is the only true one. The Jews, in particular, he observes, hated every thing that related to astronomy. Their history, that is, the marvellous part of it, is composed of new materials; but of such as they had gleaned from the various nations among whom they had been in bondage; and, that their annals might have some appearance of originality, they took the liberty to make such alterations as would give them

a superficial appearance of *novelty*, by turning singulars into plurals, and plurals into singulars; and what was feminine they made to be masculine in working it into their histories. In some places, things *inanimate* have been turned into men, by adding the sign of the masculine gender. But, as assertions are not proofs, our author gives a variety of examples from the Bible; one of which I shall quote as a specimen of his style and manner of exposition.

“ David has been said, by many authors, to be a mythological character. His name and his songs are exactly on a par with Apollo and his canticles. His marshalling his mighty men into twelve companies of three men each, and his having twelve captains, one for each month in the year, &c., looks very much like an astronomical arrangement. There are three different muster rolls of his mighties, which differ from one another. They may, however be all seen, free of expense, in the bulletins of the kings of Israel and Judah, 1st Chronicles, chap. 27, ver. 11; and 2d Samuel, chap. 23. His conduct before the handmaids of his servants, for which his wife Michal reproves him, looks very much like the Christina of the Hindoos, who danced with the *twelve gopies*, or twelve females, representing the twelve signs of the zodiac. But what has still more the appearance of astronomy is, that David, who had so many traits in his character of the singing conqueror Apollo, is the offspring of Jesse. This is but the consideration of Virgo, almost undisguised: the Isheh of the Egyptians, which the Greeks call Isis—the virgin mother of young Orus—the Sun. Here, again, we see the poverty of the inventive faculty of the Hebrew historians. Ever despising the annals of the pagans, and yet always taking them for their guide, without being able to disguise their symbols so as to hide them even from ordinary observers; for who does not know that neither the Jews nor Phenicians had a letter J in their alphabet. They could not, therefore, say Jesse but Isse, or sometimes Yesse. Isse the father of David, and Ishe the mother of Apollo, or the Sun, evidently mean the same thing.”

To be continued. 200

Our Antagonists.—Of the two papers got up for the express purpose of writing down the *Correspondent*, one of them (the Christian, and Literary Register) has expired. The other (the Antidote) still continues its ravings, in defiance of truth, consistency, and probability. It will have been perceived, that we have not, of late, noticed editorially this vehicle of abuse, cant, and hypocrisy. We could not, indeed, without annoying our readers, condescend to continue a warfare, even though defensive, in which our assailants showed an utter contempt for veracity, for fair criticism, and for rational argument; and who, whatever might be the character of the evidence we brought forward, or however incontrovertible the argument we adduced, entered the lists with an evident determination not to abandon their prejudices, and, right or wrong, to maintain the cause of fraud and superstition. Nor have we stood alone in the opinion we had formed of the unfair dealing of the conductors of the Antidote. Several correspondents, some of whose remarks we have published, have, from time to time, unreservedly and indignantly ex-

pressed their disapprobation of the course they were pursuing; and we now subjoin a letter from *Philo Veritas*, by which it will be seen that he also declines continuing a contest with these men on the same grounds that led us to refrain from animadverting on the contents of their paper.

Sir—I send you my last reply to the *Antidote*. I have no objection to continue a friendly controversy with an adversary of tolerable knowledge and good faith, but I cannot consent to do so with gross ignorance, and the most manifest disregard to truth. For a man who will argue that numerous anachronisms are no evidence of want of authenticity, no excuse can be made but ignorance and stupidity: For a man who can deny that the Pentateuch contains any anachronism that can in the smallest degree invalidate the authenticity and the divine origin of the books, no excuse can be made but some habitual disregard of truth, that tempts him to deny the plainest facts when it is his interest to do so. However, for the last time let us see what force is in this man's assertions.

Suppose a play of Shakspeare should be published, which had hitherto escaped all the collectors of Shakspeare's works; and in this play allusions should be made to the trial of Warren Hastings, Esq., for his East India delinquencies, and also to the coronation of George IV. Could these mistakes be attributed to the carelessness of transcribers, or be considered as having no bearing against the authenticity of the play?

As to his assertion that there are no anachronisms of any moment in the Pentateuch, he may find them collected by Spinoza, by Father Simon, and, in v. 1, p. 53 to p. 86, of the English translation of Volney's *Researches on Ancient History*, by Colonel Corbet, London, 1821, in 2 volumes, 8vo. You yourself, Mr. editor, must have proofs enough of the same kind, which I beg of you to publish if you possess them, and fix at once the character of fraud, ignorance, and disregard to truth, that so conspicuously marks the writer in the *Antidote*. If you have no other, I am sure your readers will be obliged to you to republish Volney's collection, to which, were it needful, I can add largely.

Without attempting to meet my objections in the face—without being able to produce any cotemporary authority for the genuineness of any of the books of the Old Testament, for I aver again, and challenge all the parsons in your state upon the subject, that there is not one extant anterior to the school of Alexandria—without naming one cotemporary ancient author who has ever mentioned the Jews as existing as a people, under regular government, before the time when the Romans subjected the horde of Bedouin Arabs—I say, without meeting or answering one of my objections, because neither he nor any of his fraudulent fraternity are able to do it, from any extant original authority—this man goes on to make the following assertions, which, if he has any authority to make them, he is bound to produce:

The Pentateuch has existed thousands of years. *It is false: it has not.*

It was originally published as the work of Moses. *I deny it.*

It has been handed down through a long succession of ages as the work of Moses: *Yes: by the pious franks of some Jewish and all the Christian priests.*

It has been universally received as his work. *I deny it: the Jews as-*

cribe the books of the *Old Testament* to Esdras, who says himself that the law was burnt, and he recomposed it.

It bears the evidence of genuineness and authenticity; Yes: the evidence of anachronisms out of number.

The Jews never doubted that the Pentateuch was a rule of action dictated through Moses by the Almighty. The Jews who attribute the compilation to Esdras have great doubts of this assertion.

I have done with this writer. To a person competent to cite original authorities, who will pay attention to the acknowledged rules of literary controversy, and who manifests a due regard to veracity, I will willingly reply as from one gentleman to another; but I cannot condescend to waste my ink and paper, much less my time, on such a writer as the *Antidote*. As a man so utterly ignorant of the subject can do no harm to any cause but his own, I quit him. He will write on, I presume, for it is the character of such writers, as Pope says:

Destroy his fib and sophistry: in vain;
The creature's at his dirty work again.

PHILO VERITAS.

Joint Stock Book Company.—It is contemplated to establish a company for the purpose of printing such liberal works as are difficult to be had in this country, even at a rate far exceeding their intrinsic value. The great and increasing demand for works of this description renders the project eligible; and when it is considered that arrangements may be made to supply the public at a fair and moderate price, and, at the same time, allow a handsome profit to the stockholders, it is believed that it cannot fail to engage general attention. Particulars will be given in our next.

Free Press Association.—The Sunday meetings of this Association will be held, in future, at half past 2 o'clock P. M., instead of 4 o'clock P. M. Punctual attendance is requested.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Power of the Spirit.—A preacher, who not long since resided in the metropolis of Massachusetts, was very much given to intoxication, and rarely ever appeared in the pulpit without being gloriously inspired by the spirit. So prone was he to fuddling, that his congregation at length turned him out of their employ, and he was obliged to follow the vocation of a "travelling pedlar;" that is to say, he travelled around the country, distributing the "crumbs of comfortable doctrine," and levied contributions, to support himself in the good work. One day, in the course of his travels, he arrived at the village of W*****m, in Connecticut, and proceeded to stick up written notices about the place, that an *eminent* minister of the gospel would deliver a discourse at the meeting house, in the centre of the village, after which there would be a contribution [Oh, of course] to defray the expenses of the evening. This pleasing intelligence spread

like wild fire among the lovers of the word, and they flocked at the hour appointed, to swallow the goodly morsels of comfort promised by the Rev. Mr. Take-a-drop.

The last ding dong of the bell had died away, and the meeting house was crowded to overflowing. All eyes were anxiously bent towards the pulpit, but the holy man was not there. Half an hour passed—no appearance—the assembly began to think it all a hoax. Deacon Good-in-time-of-need, however, determined that the cause of religion should not suffer for the lack of preachers, and therefore proceeded, after divesting his time worn jaws of half a pound of tobacco, and nearly overflowing with juice a large spit box (which some of his neighbors had placed in his pew, to insure the congregation dry feet) to inform the audience that (God willing) he should hold forth to them. Adjusting a pair of huge iron spectacles upon his nasal organ, he marched with great solemnity up to the pulpit, followed by a little squab tailed, pug nosed dog. Judge, oh reader, the amazement and feelings of the worthy deacon, when upon entering it his eyes encountered the Rev. Mr. Take-a-drop, extended upon the floor, holding in one hand a bottle, which seemed, by the effluvia which arose from it, to have contained, but a short time previous, some of the real Cognac, and in the other the holy volume. Ah! he was diabolically cocked, reader. Deacon Good-in-time-of-need, after smoothing his hair, which had become, at the sight of the object before him, as stiff as "quills upon the fretful porcupine," took hold of the *spirit-ual* man for the purpose of arousing him, just as he happened to be imagining, or dreaming that Beelzebub was seizing him. Feeling the rough gripe of the deacon, he suddenly started up, and, brandishing the bottle, exclaimed, "Avaunt thou prince of dev—Here he discovered his error, for his adversary not liking to have his brains beat out, before so many folks, seized him by the hair, and bellowed for "help," and his dog, thinking his master in danger, barked heartily, which brought the Rev. Mr. Take-a-drop to his senses, who seeing the "head and front of his offending" determined to "escape the wrath to come," by leaping out of a window close by the pulpit, which he effected, and took to his heels, and never after did he show his carcase in the neighborhood.

Matrimony.—Those who have read the Athanasian Creed, will immediately see the application of the following:

Whoever will be married, before all things it is necessary that he hold the conjugal faith.

Which faith, except every one keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall be scolded at everlastingly.

And the conjugal faith is this, that there were two rational beings created, both equal, yet one superior to the other.

The inferior shall bear rule over the superior.

The man is superior to the woman, and the woman inferior to the man.

Yet both are equal, and the woman shall govern the man.

The woman is commanded to obey the man, and the man ought to obey the woman.

And yet there are not two obedient, but one obedient.

For there is one dominion nominal of the husband, and another dominion real of the wife.

And yet there are not two dominions, but one dominion.

Moreover we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge, that wives must submit themselves to their husbands, and be subject in all things.

So we are forbidden by the conjugal faith to say, they shall be at all influenced by their wills, or pay any regard to their commands.

The man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man.

And yet the man shall be the slave of the woman, and the woman the tyrant of the man.

So that, as aforesaid, the subjection of the superior to the inferior is to be believed.

He, therefore, that would marry, must thus think of the woman and of the man.

Furthermore, it is necessary to submissive matrimony, that he also believe the infallibility of the wife.

For the right faith is this, that the wife is fallible and infallible.

Perfectly fallible and perfectly infallible, of an erring soul and an unerring mind subsisting.

Fallible as touching her human nature, and infallible as touching her female sex.

Who, although she be fallible and infallible, yet is she not two, but one woman.

Who submitted to lawful matrimony to acquire unlawful dominion, and promised religiously to obey, that she might rule in injustice and folly.

This is the conjugal faith, which, except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be married.

Tyranny to the wife, slavery to the husband, and ruin to the family.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, to the end of the world.

Amen.

Removal.—The office of the *Correspondent* is removed to No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library, where all orders and communications are requested to be forwarded.

Printing in all its branches, also *Bookbinding*, neatly and expeditiously executed on the most reasonable terms.

The following publications may be had as above:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards. The author of this work was imprisoned two years and fined in £200 sterling, by the British government, for publishing it.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary, Lond. ed., 2 vols. in one—\$1.25.

* * Orders for books, in every department of literature, punctually attended to.